MEDSHEET: A Computer Application to Assist Nurses in the Preparation of Medication Teaching Sheets for Patients

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ABSTRACT

Nonadherence with medication instructions is a prevalent and costly problem. Estimates of nonadherence range from 30 percent to 55 percent [1].

Nurses, as patient educators, can help reduce the incidence of nonadherence through the use of written and verbal instructions. Written instructions are seen by several authors as important in the promotion of adherence [1,2,3]. While there are several sources of preprinted drug education materials available that aid the clinician in educating patients, there are none that are easily individualized for particular settings or patients. Additionally, many preprinted materials are too complex for most patients to understand [4].

MEDSHEET is a computer program developed to assist nurses in the production of individualized medication instruction sheets and is currently in use at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. The program can print teaching sheets with a list of the medications that the patient is taking, the dosages and times of administration, and a brief description of each medication.

Descriptions are stored as memo fields and are predefined by the user. Additional individualized descriptions for one patient can be appended to each medication record.

The program is menu driven. Pick lists are displayed to select patients and medications. Records can be easily modified to facilitate ongoing teaching in an acute care setting. Sheets can be printed in normal fonts or enlarged fonts for the visually impaired patient.

References

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